

## **A letter to the Cato Institute on Ukraine and Russia**

To the Board of Directors of the Cato Institute  
The President  
The Executive Vice President

Dear Friends of Liberty,

We, leaders and alumni of international and Ukrainian think tanks, public policy experts and committed supporters of independent Ukraine, are concerned by recent statements in the global liberty movement concerning Ukraine and the general security situation in Europe.

We would first like to address some of the narratives in said statements.

First, there has [never been any agreement](#) on the non-expansion of NATO in Eastern Europe; on the contrary, even Russian President Putin was [eager to join](#) NATO in this first Presidency. Current dialogue between the US and Europe regarding the future of security in Europe does not concern only Ukraine and countries which are not NATO members yet – it does concern also Baltic states, Romania, Bulgaria and so forth.

Second, just like individuals, all countries have the right to self-determination in both geopolitical and national security. It is crucial to move away from the "spheres of influence" narrative, as it disrespects independent countries. If individual self-determination is respected, why shouldn't a national be too?

Third, when evaluating the security situation in Europe, we have to look at the historical context. Russia has been implementing aggressive movements against their neighbors as of 2008 – with the invasion of Georgia, then Ukraine following the 2014 Maidan revolution. Russia has repeatedly violated the airspace of the Baltic countries, even Sweden. Russia's military presence in Belarus is increasingly threatening the territorial integrity of Ukraine and surrounding countries and the EU.

Fourth, we respect different opinions on foreign policy and national security. However, sensationalist headlines urging the US Government to act one way or another raise many questions.

### **On Ukraine and CATO's commentary**

Ukraine, a young democracy, is threatened by the further Russian invasion. The war, started by Russia in 2014, has taken over 13,000 Ukrainian lives. The determination of the Ukrainian people to become part of the Western world and their voluntary choice to pursue EU and NATO

memberships are at the center of Russian military abuse. With more than 100,000 troops now concentrated on the Ukrainian border, the stakes are higher than ever.

The current crisis in Ukraine puts the Western world's values to the test. The global liberty movement prides itself on intellectual diversity, but honesty and integrity are no less important.

In a most recent [commentary](#) by Doug Bandow (January 21, 2022) of the Cato Institute, he called Western Ukrainians "less Slavic peoples". In 2014, Doug Bandow [called](#) Ukraine a "fake country" and defended Russian influence over it.

In his book, "Gullible Superpower" ([published](#) in February 2019), Cato Institute's Ted Galen Carpenter presented some of the propagandist arguments generated by the Kremlin in its information warfare against the USA and the West. More specifically, Carpenter claimed that in 2014 Ukraine's Revolution of Dignity's protestors were killing other protestors and that Ukraine has been under a massive influence of neo-nazis ever since.

However, the revolution started as a peaceful protest supporting EU integration. The violence erupted when former President Victor Yanukovych ordered the police to stop it forcibly. As a result of the shootings, more than 100 Ukrainians died. The two opposing sides of the conflict were Ukrainians seeking a European future and a police state of the pro-Russian President Yanukovych.

Although there are a few extremists in Ukraine—like everywhere else—their effect on Ukrainian politics is minuscule.

## **Conclusion**

We respect the right of experts to independently express their views in publications and understand that the opinions of these authors do not represent the editorial view of the Cato Institute.

However, we also seek to stress that the spillover effects of these fake news-based articles are disastrous. Russia uses these articles as a confirmation of the rightness of its actions. Ted Carpenter is regularly [featured](#) in the Russian state news. The headlines associate his writings with the Cato Institute's view and the United States overall.

As a movement, we might disagree on many things, in particular when it comes to foreign affairs. However, regardless of whether some of us see the US and West's involvement in Ukraine as overly pro-active, we can all agree that countries, first, have the right to self-determination and should not be allowed to invade others as they wish. Wars threaten freedom—our fundamental value. We can also all agree that although the road to a free society

is never an easy one, we should applaud the efforts made by millions of Ukrainians to move away from the socialist past.

With this, we, signers of this letter, have agreed on the following:

- We express our support for the freedom, self-determination and independence of Ukraine.
- We condemn the Russian government as an aggressor state and the oppressor of liberty and human rights;
- We appeal to the Cato Institute to consider the spillover effects of the articles by Doug Bandow and Ted Carpenter.
- We invite the Cato Institute to become intellectually diverse on foreign policy issues and offer more balanced positions on the matters which influence countries' stability.

Signed by:

- **Mart Laar**, former Prime Minister of Estonia (Estonia)
- **Leszek Balcerowicz**, Board Chairman at the Civil Development Forum (Poland) and former co-chair of Group of Strategic Advisors on the Support for Reforms in Ukraine (Poland)
- **Alexander Kvitashvili**, former Minister of Health of Ukraine and Georgia (Georgia)
- **Krassen Stanchev**, Sofia University and the Institute for Market Economics (Bulgaria)
- **Amb. Zurab Tchiaberashvili**, Professor, Ilia State University (Georgia)
- **Kateryna Yushchenko**, former First Lady of Ukraine 2005-10 (Ukraine)
- **Nirj Deva**, former Member of the European Parliament and British Parliament (United Kingdom)
- **Egle Markeviciute**, Alumna of European Students For Liberty (Lithuania)
- **Eka Tkeshelashvili**, former First Deputy Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Justice Minister and Prosecutor General of Georgia (Georgia)
- **Maria Mezentseva**, Member of the Ukrainian Parliament (Ukraine)
- **David Campbell Bannerman**, Member of the European Parliament (2009-2019) (United Kingdom)
- **Pavlo Klimkin**, co-founder Center for National Resilience and Development, former Minister of Foreign affairs of Ukraine (Ukraine)
- **Shota Dighmelashvili**, Executive Editor of Forbes Georgia, founder of civil movement SHAME (Georgia)
- **Vera Kichanova**, Board Member of the Adam Smith Center (Russia)
- **Alexander McCobin** (USA)
- **Richard Durana**, Director of Institute of Economic and Social Studies (INESS) (Slovakia)
- **Oleksandr Danylyuk**, Co-founder, Center for National Resilience and Development, Former National security chief, minister of finance, deputy head of President's office (Ukraine)
- **Lord Wharton of Yarm**, House of Lords (United Kingdom)
- **Solomiia Bobrovska**, Member of the Ukrainian Parliament (Ukraine)
- **Dr Charles Tannock**, Member of the European Parliament - Foreign Affairs Committee (1999-2019)
- **Cllr. Oliver Cooper**, Conservative Party (United Kingdom)
- **Valeri Chechelashvili**, Senior Fellow, Georgian Strategic Analysis Centre, former Ambassador of Georgia to Ukraine and Russia, frm First Deputy Foreign Minister, Minister of Finance
- **Konstantin Gabashvili**, Ambassador ret., frm Chair, parliamentary committee on foreign relations

- **Žygimantas Pavilionis MP**, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lithuanian Parliament and International Secretary of Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats
- **Daniel Hamilton**, Conservative Party (United Kingdom)
- **Nataliya Pipa**, Member of the Ukrainian Parliament (Ukraine)
- **Marek Tatala**, CEO of Economic Freedom Foundation (Poland)
- **Yuliya Tychkivska**, co-founder Bendukidze Free Market Centre, founder Open University of Maidan (Ukraine)
- **Mykhailo Lavrovsky**, CEO of the Institute for Economic Leadership and co-founder of Ukrainian Students for Freedom (Ukraine)
- **Agata Stremecka**, President of Civil Development Forum (FOR) (Poland)
- **Vasyl Myroshnychenko**, Co-Founder of Ukraine Crisis Media Center (Ukraine)
- **Alexander Skouras**, President of the Center for Liberal Studies (KEFiM) (Greece)
- **Sergey Boyko**, co-founder of the Adam Smith Centre (Russia)
- **Yaroslav Romanchuk**, President of Mises Center (Belarus)
- **Maria Chaplia**, Research Manager at the Consumer Choice Center and co-founder of the Ukrainian Students for Freedom (Ukraine)
- **Blazej Lenkowski**, President of the Board of Liberte Foundation, Director of Freedom Games (Poland)
- **Nataliya Melnyk**, Bendukidze Free Market Center (Ukraine)
- **Daniil Lubkin**, CEO, Ukrainian Students for Freedom (Ukraine)
- **Clemens Schneider**, co-founder Prometheus Institute Berlin (Germany)
- **Gia Jandieri**, Founder, Vice-President New Economic School - Georgia (Georgia)
- **Fred Roeder**, Managing Director of the Consumer Choice Center and co-founder European Students For Liberty (Germany)
- **Marie Eliadze**, Executive Director, The Margaret Thatcher Centre of Georgia
- **Henadiy Kryvosheya**, Member of the Ukrainian Parliament (2014-2019) (Ukraine)
- **Ganna Maiboroda**, chairwoman Association Patriot (Ukraine)
- **Anton Liagusha**, Associate Professor, George Mason University (USA)
- **Dmytro Dienkov**, editor-in-chief of Ekonomichna Pravda (Ukraine)
- **Maria Barabash**, Executive Director of the Office of Simple Solutions and Results (Ukraine)
- **Irakli Porchkhidze**, Vice President, the Georgian Institute for Strategic Studies (GISS) (Georgia)
- **Giorgi Badridze**, former Georgian Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Senior Fellow, Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (Georgia)
- **Nino Evgenidze**, Executive Director, Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC) (Georgia)
- **Nikoloz Vashakidze**, European Democrats Party of Georgia, Chairman of the Political Council (frm First Deputy Foreign Minister) (Georgia)
- **Hlib Vyshlinsky**, Executive Director, Centre for Economic Strategy (Ukraine)
- **Vasil Sikharulidze**, the Atlantic Council of Georgia (ACG), Former Minister of Defense of Georgia, Former Ambassador of Georgia to the US (Georgia)
- **Luca Bertoletti**, Senior Government Affairs Manager at Consumer Choice Center, co founder B&K Agency (Italy)
- **Andreas Juergens**, CEO Freedom Today Network (Germany)
- **Nodar Rukhadze**, founder of civil movement SHAME (Georgia), Journalist/Writer at Mtavari Arkhi (Georgia)
- **Dmytro Usik**, President of Ayn Rand Center - Ukraine (Ukraine)
- **Helen Khoshtaria**, political party Droa, Former Deputy State Minister of EuroAtlantic Integration, (Georgia)
- **Giga Lemonjava**, political party Droa (Georgia)

- **Mariia Donets**, head of Goncharenko Centre for Education and culture – the biggest chain of non-governmental free educational centers in Ukraine (*Ukraine*)
- **Amb. Batu Kutelia**, political party Droa, Former Georgian Ambassador to the US (*Georgia*)
- **Daria Kaleniuk**, Executive Director, Anticorruption Action Center (*Ukraine*)
- **Hanna Hopko**, head of ANTS NETWORK, chairwoman of the Foreign affairs committee of the Ukrainian Rada (2014-2019) (*Ukraine*)
- **Revaz Topuria**, Co-founder of Franklin Club; Lecturer of Political Sciences at Free University of Tbilisi & University of Georgia (*Georgia*)
- **Mariam Khokhobaia**, Founder, The Margaret Thatcher Centre of Georgia
- **Dmytro Boyarchuk**, CEO at CASE Ukraine (*Ukraine*)
- **Julia Kril**, co-founder of B&K Agency and co-founder of Ukrainian Students For Freedom (*Ukraine*)
- **Ihor Masiakin**, CEO, Solid Info (*UK, Ukraine*)
- **Zurab Batiashvili**, Research Fellow, Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies (*Georgia*)
- **Ruslan Riaboshapka**, co-founder Center for National Resilience and Development, former Prosecutor General of Ukraine (*Ukraine*)
- **Eduard Marikashvili**, Chairman of Georgia's Democracy Initiative (*Georgia*)
- **Jorge Jraissati**, Director of Alumni of Students For Liberty
- **Nino Kalandadze**, Chavchavadze Center, Director; Former Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs
- **Levan Metreveli**, former Ambassador of Georgia to Romania, Moldova, Canada, Bulgaria
- **Nino Nakashidze**, Deputy Director General of Mtavari Channel, Former Chairperson of European Integration Committee, Former Ambassador of Georgia to the Czech Republic
- **Mamuka Gamkrelidze**, European Democrats of Georgia, Secretary General. former ambassador of Georgia to China
- **Oleksandr Danylyuk**, Co-founder, Center for National Resilience and Development, Former National security chief, minister of finance, deputy head of President's office.
- **Darjan Minov**, Global Marketing Manager at Students For Liberty, CEO at 2dot Media OU (*Bosnia and Hercegovina*)
- **Rt Hon Denis MacShane**, former Minister for Europe (*United Kingdom*)
- **Tengiz Pkhaladze** - Senior fellow, European Centre for International Political Economy (ECIPE). Former Advisor-foreign relations secretary to the President of Georgia (2014-2018)
- **Katie Shoshiashvili**, Researcher, Academy Fellow at Heritage Foundation (*Georgia*)
- **Magnús Örn Gunnarsson**, Founder of the Classical Liberal Student Union, Executive Board Member of the Varðberg Atlantic Treaty Association (*Iceland*)
- **Dachi Imedadze**, Local Coordinator of Georgian Students For Liberty (*Georgia*)
- **Gvantsa Pertia**, SHAME Movement (*Georgia*)
- **Giorgi Mshvenieradze**, Democracy Defenders Georgia (*Georgia*)